



# NEWS RELEASE

U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS

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## U.S. Army Corps of Engineers announce Dam Safety Program initiatives for Town Bluff Dam

*FORT WORTH, Texas* – U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Fort Worth District officials met recently with local cities and water utilities to discuss the Corps' plan to improve safety at Town Bluff Dam. The dam is not in imminent danger of failing, but Corps officials will begin an intense study of the structure to assess if any permanent remediation construction efforts are needed. The Corps will implement interim risk reduction measures, which are temporary solutions, while pursuing a long term study. The interim risk reduction measures will be implemented as funding becomes available. The study is to assess if long term remediation efforts are needed, and will take approximately one year to complete and is scheduled to conclude in 2012.

A risk informed screening process, which considers current dam behavior, how well the dam meets current design criteria, as well as the potential consequences of dam failure were recently conducted. The screenings rated the dam as having very high risk characteristics. The very high risk classification is a result of confirmed and unconfirmed issues and downstream consequences. Consequences include lives lost, economic, environmental and other impacts.

Corps engineers, however, say the dam has a good performance history and is currently performing its intended function but that interim risk reduction measures and further studies are warranted. No changes in operations of the lake are anticipated while the interim risk reduction measures are implemented and study is being conducted.

"Town Bluff Dam is operating as designed but is over 50 years old and we continue to assess and ensure its safe operation. We will continue to keep our congressional leaders, stakeholders and public informed of our actions to keep the dam structurally sound for all Texans. Safety above all, is our number one priority," said Col. Richard J. Muraski, Jr., Commander, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Fort Worth District.

The Fort Worth District operates and maintains 25 flood risk management dams in Texas providing approximately 35 percent of the quality water supply for the state. As part of the responsibility in managing these dams, the Corps has a comprehensive dam safety program that has public safety as its primary objective. Corps dams are routinely inspected and continually evaluated for safety in accordance with the Federal Guidelines for Dam Safety issued in 1979.

In 2005, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers began performing Screening Portfolio Risk Analyses allowing USACE maintained and operated dams nationwide to be prioritized. Town Bluff Dam was screened in August 2008 and considered both performance and consequence of failure (risk-informed screening).

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## TOWN BLUFF DAM

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Town Bluff Dam was placed into operation in 1951 and serves the citizens of Texas by assisting Sam Rayburn Reservoir in providing flood risk management to the Angelina and Neches River basins, quality water supply to the Lower Neches Valley Authority and Beaumont area, produce a clean source of electric generation and providing environmental stewardship and recreational opportunities. The Corps of Engineers tests, evaluations and subsequent required work are ongoing to ensure that the 60-year-old project will continue to safely provide these important services.

For more information contact the Public Affairs Office, 817-886-1306.

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**News Media Availability:** Lake Operations and Dam Safety representatives will be available for on camera interviews on Feb. 23 at 10 a.m. at the Town Bluff Lake Office, 5171 FM 92 South, Woodville, Texas 75979.

**About the Fort Worth District:** The Fort Worth District, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers was established in 1950. The District is responsible for water resources development in two-thirds of Texas, and design and construction at military installations in Texas and parts of Louisiana and New Mexico. Visit the Fort Worth District Web site at: [www.swf.usace.army.mil](http://www.swf.usace.army.mil). and SWF's Facebook page at: <http://www.facebook.com/pages/Fort-Worth-District-US-Army-Corps-of-Engineers#!/pages/Fort-Worth-District-US-Army-Corps-of-Engineers/188083711219308>